

MGF 008-81

7 June 1981

Memorandum for: Director, FBIS
Through: Chief, Operations Group
Subject: Monthly Report-Gulf Bureau--May 1981

I. GENERAL

Arabic monitor [] and Persian/Dari/Urdu monitor [] were brought on duty during the month and are at work within their sections. When [] is fully operational, Gulf will have the capacity to assume coverage of Gulf News Agency, Emirates News Agency and Qatar News Agency casts currently covered by Jordan Bureau. [] is making good progress, and we are looking toward a target date in early August for the shift of Arabic coverage. STAT

The addition of [] a former employee at the old Cyprus Bureau and in Okinawa, gives us additional flexibility in balancing our Urdu and Persian coverage. Since our monitor currently assisting the BBC will not return before mid-June, [] presence provides much-needed help for the Persian team. It will also allow us to release part-time Urdu monitor Abrar when [] becomes completely operational. STAT

III. OPERATIONS

1. Gulf provided full coverage of the proceedings surrounding the birth of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Abu Dhabi. The preliminary meetings of foreign ministers, live television shots of the opening ceremony, and the reading of the final statement were monitored from Abu Dhabi radio and area TV. The videotape of the opening ceremony, which was relayed via a linkup of all area Arab television services, has since been ordered for viewing in Headquarters.

2. In agreement with Bangkok Bureau and NEAAD, primary coverage of Pakistani newspapers was assumed during the month. Gulf is currently receiving DAWN, MASHRIQ, JANG, JASARAT and NAWAI-I-WAKHAT with timelags ranging between 1 and 3 days. Although the papers are unlikely to become heavy producers so long as press censorship continues, there have been indications of a possible liberalization of Islamabad's censorship regulations.

3. Gulf also assumed coverage of more Arabic papers from London PMU. Those added were Abu-Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD and its weekly counterpart AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I and Kuwait's AS-SIYASAH and AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM.

4. The bureau assisted Nicosia with backstop coverage of Cairo MENA in mid-month when the Israel-Syria conflict over Lebanon looked as if it might erupt into full-scale war. It was demonstrated that MENA can be printed reliably throughout the broadcast day. Cairo radio was also checked and found to be monitorable at Gulf on at least one frequency most of the time.

5. Gulf offered to assist with monitoring of Karachi radio programs so that Bangkok could devote full attention to coverage of Bangladesh when President Ziaur Rahman was assassinated. The coup attempt fizzled out quickly and Bangkok was able to handle both Karachi and Dacca programming without assistance.

6. In response to a request from FCS, reception of various Turkish transmitters was checked. As expected, the results varied, but it was demonstrated that Ankara Domestic Service can be heard with fair/good reception from signon to signoff. Thus backstop coverage could be provided if necessary.

7. Gulf supplied two videotapes of Saudi television programs for NEAAD. They are to be used for language training. In addition, at AG's request the bureau provided a complete, minute-by-minute rundown of Riyadh television content during a typical broadcast day. We plan to provide similar information on the other area television services that are monitorable.

8. Paris AFP was sampled experimentally during the month. Reception is solid during the day. We proposed to Nicosia, and it agreed, that Gulf cover AFP material on Iran, Iraq, the Yemens, Saudi Arabia and the other gulf countries.

III. VISITS

1. Deputy Director [redacted] visited the bureau STAT
26-29 May as part of his tour of FBIS European and Middle
East bureau. [redacted] conferred with Ministry of STAT
Information officials and embassy officers.

2. Regional Engineer [redacted] arrived from STAT
Nicosia late in the month. [redacted] obtained a visa STAT
from the Pakistani Embassy here preparatory to a TDY
assignment in Islamabad.

[redacted] STAT

Deputy Chief